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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/782,324	02/19/2004	Stefan Raav	SBV-10528	7620

24131 7590 03/25/2005  
LERNER AND GREENBERG, PA  
P O BOX 2480  
HOLLYWOOD, FL 33022-2480

EXAMINER
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HANSEN, COLBY M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3682

DATE MAILED: 03/25/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/782,324

**Applicant(s)**

RAAV ET AL.

**Examiner**

Colby Hansen

**Art Unit**

3682

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>2/19/2004</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.  |

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## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Tomaru (US Pat. 5,531,317).

Tomaru (US Pat. 5,531,317) discloses a locking configuration, comprising: an adjustable steering column 2 (fig. 5) ; a fixed mounting 7; a tilt-adjustable casing tube 3 secured on said fixed mounting, said tilt-adjustable casing tube surrounding said adjustable steering column; a locking device (fig. 6) provided between said fixed mounting and said tilt-adjustable casing tube, said locking device having an actuating lever 11 pivotable between a locking position and a release position such that said actuating lever pivots laterally next to or below said tilt-adjustable casing tube 3 and such that the releases position is below the locking position; said locking device having a handle component for said actuating lever, said handle component being disposed at a given distance from said tilt-adjustable casing tube when said actuating lever is in the locking position; and said actuating lever being configured as a deformation element for absorbing energy wherein said actuating lever is deformable in a crash such that said handle component moves toward said tilt-adjustable casing tube (the handle inherently will

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deform upon necessary external force, such as by a driver's body or some other object impacting the lever).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tomaru (US Pat. 5,531,317) in view of Roesby (US Pat. 3,760,651).

Tomaru (US Pat. 5,531,317) discloses the claimed invention except for the explicit disclosure of a lever member pre-designed for impact absorption.

Roesby (US Pat. 3,760,651) discloses a lever wherein said actuating lever 20 has an angled region (fig. 5) formed with a predetermined buckling point; wherein said actuating lever 20 has a hook-shaped bent region adjacent said handle component and is formed with a predetermined buckling point at said hook-shaped bent region; wherein: said actuating lever has a cross-sectional profile selected from the group consisting of a rectangular profile 24 and a T-shaped profile; and said actuating lever has a given region selected from the group consisting of an angled region and a bent region, said given region having a reduction in cross section for forming a predetermined buckling point (the cross-section is reduced from the prior art as disclosed within the patent).

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It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have utilized the impact absorbing lever of Roesby (US Pat. 3,760,651) within locking lever of Tomaru (US Pat. 5,531,317), so in the event of an automobile collision, the lever with easily deform, thus reducing the likelihood of injury to the driver, as suggested by Roesby (US Pat. 3,760,651).

Furthermore, with regard to the cladding limitation, said "cladding" is known within the automobile industry commonly as a "kick panel". Utilizing a "kick panel" with padding and with a "trough" (i.e. counterbore with slot) is old and well known. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have utilized said "kick panel" to further disperse force resulting from the impact of the driver onto said "kick panel", thereby thus reducing the likelihood of injury to the driver.

### ***FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION***

Submission of your response by facsimile transmission is encouraged. Group 3600's facsimile number is **(703) 872-9306**. Recognizing the fact that reducing cycle time in the processing and examination of patent applications will effectively increase a patent's term, it is to your benefit to submit responses by facsimile transmission whenever permissible. Such submission will place the response directly in our examining group's hands and will eliminate Post Office processing and delivery time as well as the PTO's mail room processing and delivery time. For a complete list of correspondence **not** permitted by facsimile transmission, see MPEP 502.01. In general, most responses and/or amendments not requiring a fee, as well as those requiring a fee but charging such fee to a deposit account, can be submitted by facsimile

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transmission. Responses requiring a fee which applicant is paying by check **should not be** submitting by facsimile transmission separately from the check.

Responses submitted by facsimile transmission should include a Certificate of Transmission (MPEP 512). The following is an example of the format the certification might take:

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the Patent and Trademark Office (Fax No. (703) 872-9306) on \_\_\_\_\_

(Date)

Typed or printed name of person signing this certificate:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Signature)

If your response is submitted by facsimile transmission, you are hereby reminded that the original should be retained as evidence of authenticity (37 CFR 1.4 and MPEP 502.02). Please do not separately mail the original or another copy unless required by the Patent and Trademark Office. Submission of the original response or a follow-up copy of the response after your response has been transmitted by facsimile will only cause further unnecessary delays in the processing of your application; duplicate responses where fees are charged to a deposit account may result in those fees being charged twice.

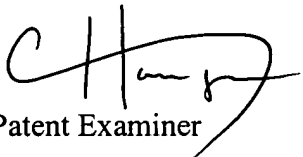
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***Conclusion***

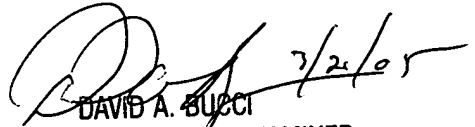
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Colby Hansen whose telephone number is (703) 305-1036. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday and every other Friday from 7:30 PM to 5:00 PM (EST).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Bucci, can be reached on (703) 308-3668. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-2168.

Colby M. Hansen

  
Patent Examiner

3-21-05

  
DAVID A. BUCCI  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600